

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Exhibition of stunning Tanenbaum African donation kicks off Art Gallery of Hamilton's Summer Season

The Art Gallery of Hamilton's Summer 2010 exhibition season continues the Gallery's ***Vital Africa*** celebration with the exhibition of the noted Tanenbaum donation of African art.

Vital Africa, the AGH's year-long celebration of African arts and culture and its influence on the world, is presented by TD. A series of Family Visits, Family Weekend Workshops and Family Performances inspired by ***Vital Africa*** are funded by the Government of Ontario. Visitors to Hamilton enjoy the hospitality of the Sheraton Hamilton Hotel, our hotel partner.

On view from May 22 to September 6, ***Dance of Life: The Tanenbaum African Collection*** spans a wide variety of cultures, themes, media and formats (from intimate figurines to over-life-size figural statues and decorative arts). Assembled by prominent Canadian collectors and philanthropists Joey and Toby Tanenbaum, and donated to the AGH in 2010, this exhibition will showcase a significant selection from the impressive Tanenbaum African Collection, consisting of works primarily from east, central and west Africa, including examples of Oceanic art. Dating chiefly from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, the works include such striking pieces as masks of Mali and high-relief sculpted door panels of Nigeria, to open-network columnar palace supports of Cameroon and large-scale funerary figures of the Congo. Curated by Dr. Patrick Shaw Cable.

On view May 22 to September 6, ***Europe's Exoticized East*** presents a diverse array of lush visions created by 19th-century European "Orientalists" — the name given during the period to artists who specialized in Near Eastern and North African subjects. The exhibition utilizes as a base the rich selection of Orientalist paintings and sculptures in the AGH Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Collection of European Art, which includes the painters Jean-Léon Gérôme and Charles Bargue and the sculptors Charles Cordier and Antoine-Louis Barye. Supplementing these works are several significant loans from institutions in Canada and abroad. With their varying degrees of fantastic, realist and naturalist approaches to the subject, these works of art are also telling visual documents of 19th-century Western cultural and political attitudes toward the Near East. Curated by Dr. Patrick Shaw Cable.

On view June 10 to October 3, ***Brendan Fernandes: until we fearless*** pushes viewers to reconsider perceptions and inhibitions about the cultural identities associated with Africa and the African Diaspora. Throughout the exhibition space, the juxtapositions of images, natural and man-made materials, and tribal and nonsensical sounds lead the viewer to consider the many ways in which the arts and artifacts of Africa have been presented within popular culture. In this exhibition, nature and culture come together as complicated forms, offering a new perspective on identity. Curated by Melissa Bennett.

This exhibition is Fernandes' first solo exhibition at the museum level, and is the culmination of several years of his most poignant artistic investigations. Brendan Fernandes has been long-listed for the 2010 Sobey Art Award, Canada's preeminent prize for contemporary Canadian art.

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On view June 5 to October 3, **Cake: Fiona Kinsella** is the next installment of the AGH's Atelier series. The familiar is made strange in this exhibition of ornately decorated cakes and thick abstract oil paintings. Kinsella's cakes, iced with baker's fondant, are situated precariously between beauty and the grotesque. Appearing at first as standard cakes that are often used to mark rites of passage like birthdays, weddings, or funerals, the cakes are here adorned with small objects such as bones, religious relics, teeth, and are sometimes encircled with human hair. Curated by Melissa Bennett.

Fiona Kinsella is a mixed media artist and painter based in Hamilton and is represented by Transit Gallery (Hamilton).

The above exhibitions are located on the AGH's Gallery Level One. Admission to these exhibitions is \$10 for adults, \$8 for students and seniors, \$4 for children ages 6 to 17 years. Children under the age of 5 years receive free admission. Family admission (consisting of two adults and up to four children) is \$25. AGH Members receive free admission.

Full-time students of Mohawk College, McMaster University, Redeemer College, Columbia College and the Canadian Institute for Dental Hygiene are student e-Members at the AGH and receive free exhibition admission courtesy of the Gallery's Audience Development partner, RBC.

The following exhibitions are located on the AGH's Gallery Level Two, with free admission courtesy of Orlick Industries:

On view until August 15, **Robert Mason** is a large-scale exhibition of a Hamilton-based artist who influenced a generation of artists in this community. It brings together over forty works from public and private collections including the last suite of works he produced prior to his death in 2005. Expressed through painting, installation, photography and sculpture, Mason's interests can be contextualized within larger artistic movements in North America such as land art and painterly abstraction. Recurring motifs and themes in Mason's paintings include the landscape, trees, the night sky and migration. Known for his dedication to arts and education in Hamilton, Mason is remembered and honoured through this exhibition that uncovers significant stages in his career. Guest curated by Shirley Madill

On view until August 15, **Shaped by Light** brings together the work of four historical Canadian artists who journeyed to Africa during the first decades of the 20th century, and for whom these excursions resulted in distinct bodies of work. Including the work of James Wilson Morrice (1865 – 1924), John Lyman (1886 – 1967), Robert Pilot (1898 – 1967) and William Ogilvie (1901-1989), the exhibition explores how the North African experience variously shaped their painting practices. Curated by Tobi Bruce

In the Jean and Ross Fischer Gallery, with free admission courtesy of Orlick Industries to these community exhibitions:

On view May 20 to June 27, **Follow Your Art V: SAGE Student Association** continues the very rewarding collaboration between the SAGE Program at Hamilton's Strathcona School and the AGH. Students and teachers have once again made a series of visits to the Gallery touring and studying AGH exhibitions and creating work inspired by the themes and artists presented. This year's exhibition is diverse, including painting, assemblage sculpture and photography and reveals the talent and creativity present in these young artists.

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On view July 3 to August 29, ***Angels of Colour: A Youth Project Celebrating the 175th Anniversary of Stewart Memorial Church*** is a collaboration by the youth of Hamilton's Stewart Memorial Church community on a large scale mural that shows images of angels of colour. The piece is a comment on stereotypical images of angels as white and cherub-like, and is created with the artistic direction of Roger Ferreira. The work represents unity of the sacred and the secular; of historic stereotypes and contemporary understandings; and unity of mainstream art practices and marginalized practices such as graffiti art.

The Art Gallery of Hamilton's programming activities are assisted by the City of Hamilton, Ontario Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts, and the Department of Canadian Heritage.

The Art Gallery of Hamilton has organized an engaging lineup of film, performance, children's, family and adult programming to complement its ***Vital Africa*** celebration. Please visit www.artgalleryofhamilton.com for complete exhibition and programming information,

Art Gallery of Hamilton is located at 123 King Street West in downtown Hamilton, 905-527-6610. Gallery hours: Tuesday and Wednesday Noon to 7 pm, Thursday and Friday Noon to 9 pm, Saturday and Sunday Noon to 5 pm. Closed Mondays. The AGH is open from Noon to 5 pm on Victoria Day (Monday, May 24), Canada Day (Thursday, July 1), Civic Day (Monday, August 2) and Labour Day (Monday, September 6).

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To access high-resolution images of AGH exhibitions and programming, please e-mail: steve@artgalleryofhamilton.com

For further information on the Art Gallery of Hamilton, its exhibitions and programming, please contact:

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